

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, March 3, 1994

Published Since 1877

## Billy Graham and Kim Il Sung: odd friendship made in heaven?

By Erich Bridges

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — On the surface, it seems one of the strangest friendships since John the Baptist entertained Herod with his thundering sermons.

Billy Graham, Christian evangelist and man of God. Kim Il Sung, communist dictator and secular "god" of North Korea.

Graham visited Kim — for the second time — during a late-January trip the Southern Baptist preacher took to North Korea. Their three hours together included a "delightful luncheon," according to Graham, and discussion of religious and political issues.

Kim "can be tough but he has a tender place in his heart," Graham said. The evangelist is reading Kim's autobiography (he's up to volume four), and claims it "reads like a novel. You can't put it down."

Perhaps that's because Kim's book is a novel. No one in the West knows the actual events of his long life, which is shrouded in heroic myth and legend. Few Western heads of state have met Kim even once. He rarely leaves his capital, Pyongyang, and receives few emissaries from democratic nations.

Yet the man who has ruled North Korea absolutely for half a century, who crushed the once-vibrant churches there, who created a personality cult rivaling Mao's and Stalin's, who helped start the Korean War and regularly threatens a new one — this man has warmly welcomed evangelical Christianity's most famous spokesman not once but twice.

What's more, Graham delivered a private message from President

Bill Clinton to Kim — as he carried one from President George Bush two years ago — and relayed

Kim's reply to Clinton. Graham himself stressed that he went not as a diplomat or

politician but as a private citizen and a Christian.

"One of my reasons for going at this time was to express my concern for peace in the region and to make whatever small contribution I could to better relations between our two nations," he said during a post-trip press conference in Hong Kong. "I do not pretend to know the exact formula for solving the present tensions."

Still, the *Wall Street Journal* observed in an editorial, it is "notable that Mr. Kim would use a man of God to convey a message to President Clinton." Kim could have chosen any number of other world leaders, diplomats, or third governments through which to communicate.

While in North Korea, Graham was once again allowed to preach. He also lectured students and teachers at the Kim Il Sung University in Pyongyang, spoke to 1,000 people at the Great People's Study House (North Korea's version of the Library of Congress), and was interviewed on national television.

Information from a society as closed as North Korea's emerges in bits and pieces.

The following are a few such fragments, as reported by a Christian expert on North Korea:

— **Hunger is increasing** in the countryside because of antiquated agricultural methods, mismanagement, bad weather, poor harvests, and the loss of preferential economic treatment from Russia and China.

Pyongyang, the capital, "is a showcase city and people there are generally better fed," said the expert. "But you get out of

Pyongyang and there is a great deal of near-famine."

A recent North Korean defector told news reporters people in some areas were eating boiled animal feed with corn and beans mixed in. "That is more than poverty," the expert said.

— **Persistent reports** of demonstrations and unrest in some areas are at least partially true. But the unrest probably results from growing hunger, not a drive for freedom. "North Korean people have been without freedom so long, I think they've forgotten what freedom is," said the observer. "All they know is a controlled society."

— **The few open churches** remain tightly controlled, but secret house churches continue to meet and multiply, "some back up in the mountain valleys, some in the larger cities."

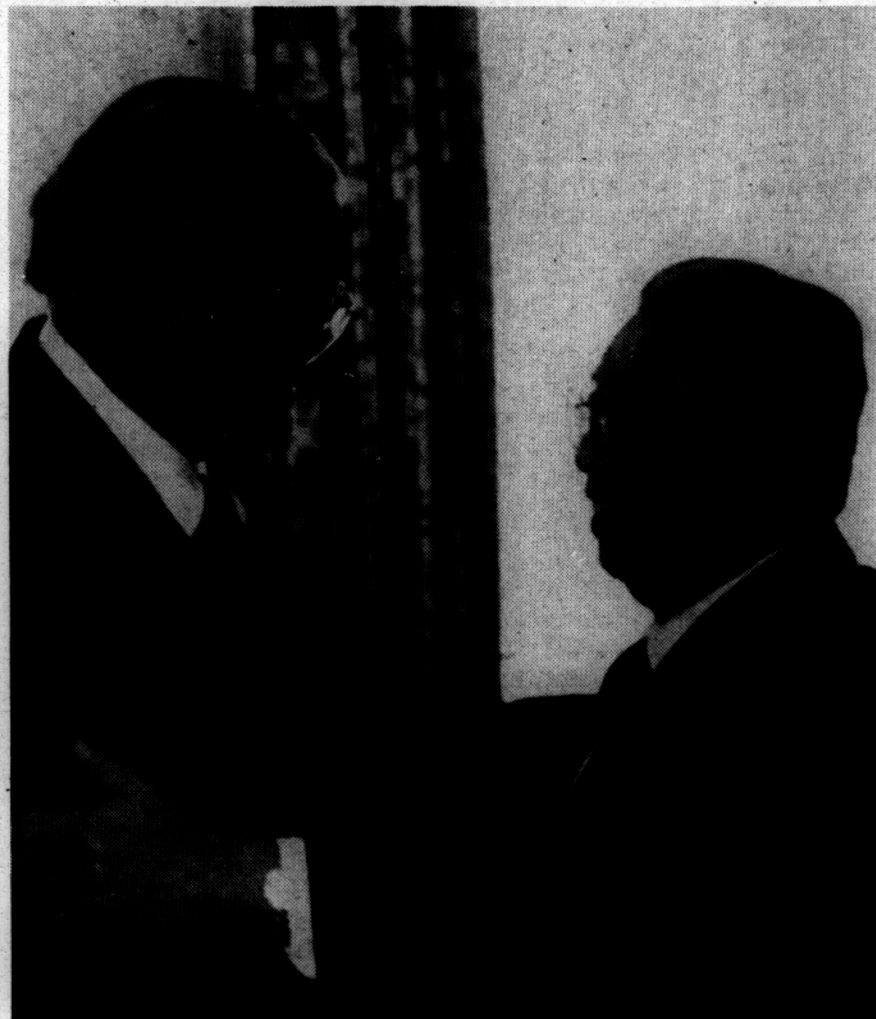
At least 30,000 Christians and perhaps as many as 1.5 million live in North Korea, one Korean-American Christian estimated last year. Another count estimated Christians number about 200,000 — or 1% of the population.

— **Bibles are going into** North Korea. "It's slow, maybe one or two at a time, but they are going in."

What is now North Korea was once the heart of Korean Christianity. Pyongyang was known as "the Jerusalem of the East."

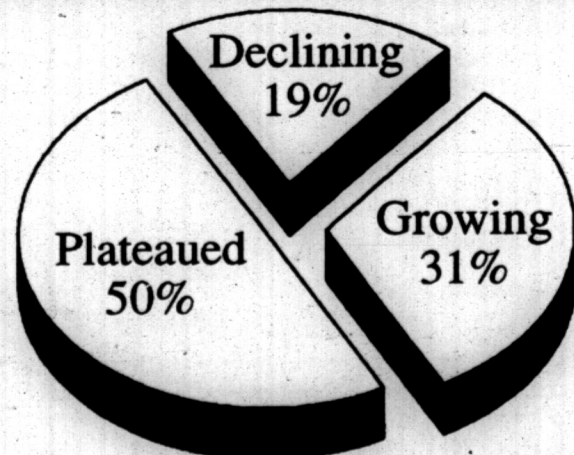
But Christianity was suppressed there after Korea divided and communists took over following World War II. Many believers fled south, died under persecution, or were killed during the Korean War.

Bridges writes for FMB.



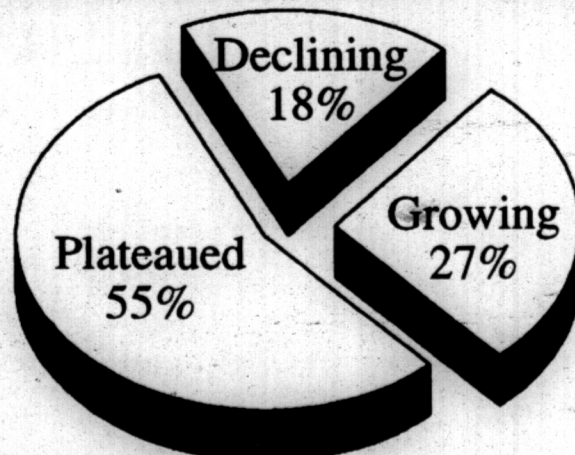
**ODD FRIENDSHIP** — Billy Graham is greeted by North Korean leader Kim Il Sung, right, during Graham's recent visit to the hard-line communist nation. They became acquainted during the evangelist's first trip to North Korea two years ago. On the surface, it seems a strange friendship: Graham, Christian evangelist, and Kim Il Sung, communist dictator. Their three hours together included a "delightful luncheon," according to Graham, and discussion of religious and political issues. Graham, who carried a message to Kim from President Bill Clinton, also was allowed to preach and lecture university students in North Korea. (BP photo)

### SBC church growth



Growing : 1987-92 membership growth > 10%  
Plateaued : 1987-92 membership change + or - 10%  
Declining : 1987-92 membership loss > 10%

### Mississippi church growth



Source: Southern Baptist Handbook 1993

### Looking back . . .

#### 10 years ago

Jackson native High Redmon and his wife, Deborah, are appointed by the SBC Foreign Mission Board as missionaries to Venezuela. Both are children of missionaries serving in Ivory Coast.

#### 20 years ago

The final bucket of concrete is poured into the superstructure of the new Mississippi Baptist Hospital facility in Jackson, just across State Street from the venerable old hospital complex.

#### 50 years ago

Churches are urged to ignore a federal government wartime request to move church services to 6 a.m. so members can work a full day in the cotton fields on Sunday.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL

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## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

## Marching toward the 21st century

The Executive Committee of the SBC met last week conducting the convention business in a flurry of committees and several plenary sessions. The "gallery" attendance was down this year and the spirit and attitude seemed to follow suit.

The big guns were turned on the Annuity Board as they seek to divest, "in orderly fashion," equities in any company promoting abortion. The Annuity Board had its hands slapped for providing services beyond the denomination... such as to Mid-America Seminary, Criswell College, and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship officials.

The 78-member committee also wants the SBC to decide yea or nay on monies coming to the SBC boards and agencies through the CBF. Several agencies, including the Home Mission Board, have previously stated, "We'll take it from any source." Others see it as being a bit hypocritical to attack them and then say, "We will, however, take your money."

The penalty flag was thrown on the Baptist World Alliance for inviting Keith Parks, former Foreign Mission Board leader, to address a BWA-sponsored conference in Cyprus, and the motion was made to deduct \$20,000 from BWA budget allocation as a protest. Never mind the autonomy

of other Baptist bodies, nor that the convention and pastors conference have invited former President Bush and Jerry Falwell in the past. Keith Parks is as sound biblically as any Southern Baptist. Gratefully, the motion was defeated, but even in defeat it cast a long shadow.

Morris Chapman gave an upbeat address on running, not merely accidentally falling, into the next century. A great pilot-video called "News Matrix" was presented but funding is doubtful. It may be too much of an SBC vanity piece for the secular networks, but it carries a good message if we can get it on the air.

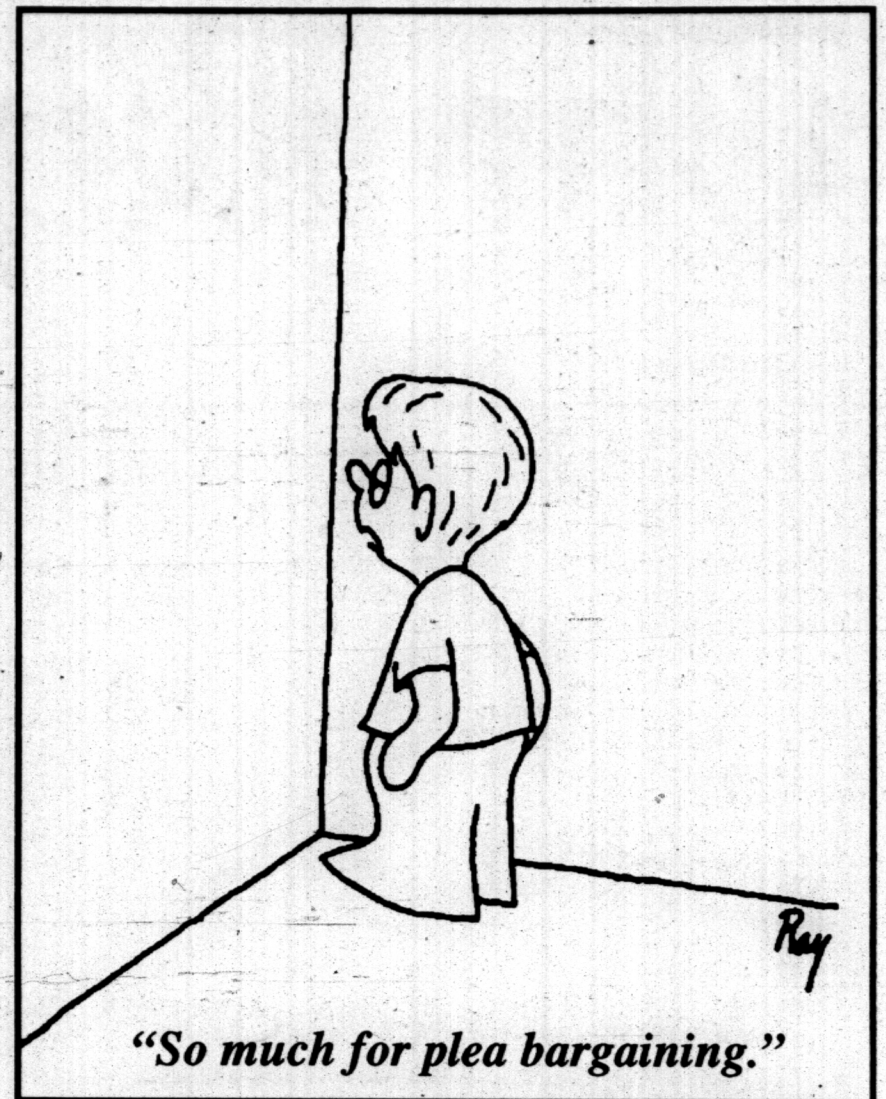
C. Barry McCarty, the Church of Christ parliamentarian, has been signed for the three-day Orlando convention. He has been on the SBC platform for a decade or so. We've paid him \$10,000 to \$16,000 per year, but now budgets are shaky and McCarty will have to settle for \$10,000 this year. Sorry about that, C. Barry.

If you love efficiency, this meeting would have gained your applause. There were multitudinous motions and not a dissenting vote. Committees had discussed each motion thoroughly and that is tantamount to Executive Committee approval. SBC President Ed Young took the closing portion to

report on the work of the nine task forces he appointed in 1992. Young quoted one part of the report admonishing the SBC to work aggressively to change the slant of the media (state Baptist papers). There should be no investigative reporting. Leave the knots on the log alone. Don't report any negatives and "cover thy brothers' nakedness" according to the Word.

Had the biblical writers heeded this we would know nothing of Abraham's lying, David's adultery, Peter's denial, or Paul and Barnabas' sharp contentions. The Bible records it as it happened, warts and all. I know of no editor who delights in reporting the faults of an agency or a brother. Better it is to confess it, report it, and forsake it, than to sweep it under the transparent rug of obscurity.

Young was on target in declaring we need a clear strategy to reach our cities. The Home Mission Board is making headway in this area, but we still have a long way to go. Young said he prays faithfully for President Bill Clinton; however, his ideas on abortion, free condoms, and free needles are anti-family and contrary to what the Bible teaches. This nakedness, Mr. President, must not be covered.



"So much for plea bargaining."

## THE FRAGMENTS

## The enemy

A Christian from Central America lived for a short time in the States. He was asked, "What is the most difficult thing in living a Christian life in America?"

He didn't hesitate, but said, "Here it is very difficult to identify the enemy."

This statement smacks of a weak, anemic church trying to be at peace with the world. Have we watered down the gospel so much that the world can easily accept

us now?

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

Has our walk and our talk become so diluted and polluted that we are indistinguishable from those around us?

As Harold T. Bryson wrote in his book *Increasing the Joy*, "Will the real Christian please stand?" — GH

## Guest Opinion...

## Churches shouldn't ship out problems

By Lynn P. Clayton

The articles in this (Feb. 17) issue of the *Baptist Message* about the sexual misconduct of some ministers are disturbing and disheartening. We should not allow the information in these articles to obscure the fact that the overwhelming percentage of ministers conduct their ministries without falling prey to the exceptionally strong temptations for sexual misconduct their work places upon them.

But, ministerial sexual misconduct does occur. What are church leaders to do when they suddenly experience the nightmare of discovering, that beyond doubt, their church's minister has engaged in sexual misconduct?

Some churches not only fire the minister, they do everything they can to destroy him emotionally, spiritually, and vocationally, now and for the future.

Some churches allow the minister to quickly find another place of service, without the sexual misconduct becoming known except to a few church insiders.

The most common way of dealing with the person is dismissal, or at least immediate forced resignation, but the reason is kept quiet, except for gossip and rumors.

In choices two and three, the congregation passes a tragic problem on to another unsuspecting church. The minister usually finds another place of service without the new congregation knowing it may well have a minister with a propensity for sexual misconduct. Indeed, in a high percentage of incidents, the minister repeats his offense. Certainly, generalizations are dangerous, but one can say in a troubling percentage of cases, ministers who have committed sexual improprieties, and who receive no substantial psychological and spiritual counseling, too frequently commit the same offense again.

What should a church do when its minister is involved in sexual misconduct?

As an organization existing to make tangible Jesus Christ, the church should strive to demon-

strate Christ-like compassion and redemption, including dealing firmly and responsibly with the person. Forcing a minister to change locations is not an appropriate response, nor is trying to completely destroy the man.

The issue is frequently complex. Friends (Quaker) writer Richard J. Foster writes convincingly in his best selling book, *Money, Sex and Power*, that sexual misconduct is fueled not only by physical drives, but by temptation to gain power and control over another person. A shortsighted or naive approach to the problem will not suffice.

When a minister is proven (the emphasis here is on proven, not just accused) to have committed sexual misconduct, he should be relieved of his ministerial responsibilities. The leadership of the church — especially people who might be called for recommendations by church search committees — should know, with appropriate confidentiality, why the person resigned, so they can tell the

church that calls for recommendations.

The church's director of missions as well as the director of its convention church/minister relations office should know for the same reasons.

The church, working with the association and the state convention, should do all within its power to insist that the minister, and probably his wife, enter extensive, long-range counseling and accountability. The church should make clear to the minister that it will not cover up the problem if another church calls and not participate in perpetuating these tragedies.

When a minister fails, his church could go the extra mile of

redemption by offering to pay for spiritual and emotional therapy the minister and his family will need. Then, if therapy and accountability are completed, the church can report that along with the negative.

Should a minister who has committed adultery be considered by a church? In the Baptist way of doing things, every congregation must make its own decision. But surely, for God's sake and the sake of his churches, before entertaining that kind of recommendation, the minister would have gone through extensive counseling and accountability and have amply proven himself over an extended period of time.

Clayton is editor, Louisiana BAPTIST MESSAGE.

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## Annuity Board faces double threat by Exec. Committee

By Mark Wingfield

NASHVILLE (ABP) — The Annuity Board faced a double-barreled confrontation with the Executive Committee Feb. 21-22 but negotiated a last-minute cease-fire on one conflict.

The other conflict — which pits the Annuity Board against the Southern Baptist Foundation and state Baptist foundations — has not been finally resolved.

The first conflict relates to the Annuity Board's investment in companies perceived to be supportive of abortion. The second conflict relates to the Annuity Board's operation within its program statement.

Program statements are the guidelines given to all SBC agencies, institutions, and commissions to outline the boundaries within which they have authority to operate. In this case, the Southern Baptist Foundation and state Baptist foundations allege the Annuity Board is encroaching upon their territory by offering endowment management services. Further, the Executive Committee expressed concern about the Annuity Board providing annuity investment services to three non-SBC entities.

All the concerns were aired in meetings of the Executive Committee's program and budget subcommittee in Nashville. During that meeting, the subcommittee was charged with developing a 1994-95 budget for distribution of the Cooperative Program, the SBC unified budget funds.

The abortion debate first surfaced in this context, during the time when agency heads make their appeals to the subcommittee for funds. The Annuity Board, with an annual budget of \$26 million, receives \$1.06 million in the current SBC budget, used primarily for relief to underfunded pensioners.

In recent years, a small portion of this CP allotment has been used for educational and promotional work in the states. However, the Annuity Board already had announced that 100% of the allocation would be given to relief beginning in 1995.

During Annuity Board President Paul Powell's initial presentation to the subcommittee, several members questioned him about the board's investment policy related to abortion.

The Annuity Board has a policy against investing in any companies producing liquor, tobacco, or pornography. But tracking down companies who contribute either directly or indirectly to Planned

Parenthood, for example, is difficult, he said.

From an investment standpoint, Powell said, "there is no abortion industry." Thus, divesting from abortion-related stocks cannot be done, he said.

"What you're asking is illogical and unreasonable and simply cannot be done," Powell said.

Further, Powell argued, not all participants in the Annuity Board's plans oppose abortion. Therefore, an improper screening of investments could expose the Annuity Board to lawsuits from some clients who would charge that social-policy screening had resulted in a lowered return on their investments. Similar lawsuits have been filed against other annuity companies, he said.

Powell's arguments largely fell on deaf ears in the subcommittee for two days. Committee members expressed frustration that surely something more could be done to make a stronger statement against abortion.

A variety of punitive actions against the Annuity Board were discussed, ranging from completely defunding the board, to asking a different agency to administer relief funds. Ultimately, the subcommittee proposed giving the Annuity Board the funds but with a notation that they were to be used exclusively for annuitant relief "until such time as the Annuity Board approves a position on abortion-related activities that is consistent with that of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Debate on this issue was intense throughout several sessions. At one point, a subcommittee member revealed a chart showing the salaries of top Annuity Board administrators. Some members suggested there was a stark contrast between those salaries and the appeal for CP funds to assist struggling annuitants.

According to the chart, which apparently had been given to Annuity Board trustees last October, eight of the Annuity Board's top administrators draw base salaries ranging from \$100,000 to \$195,900. The average salary of the board's 12 top administrators is \$122,312.

Also during the debate, which cannot be reported in direct quotations, a prominent committee member suggested that the only way to get the Annuity Board's attention would be to gain control of their trustee board the same way conservatives gained control of the Executive Committee and

several other key trustee boards in recent years. This member said the Annuity Board previously had been left alone because it was not a center of power.

At the final meeting of the program and budget subcommittee, Powell introduced William Willis, an Arkansas layman who serves as chairman of Annuity Board trustees.

Willis did not grant permission for his comments to be reported in full. However, he engaged the subcommittee members in a lively debate for an extended period. He specifically decried the release of salary information, which he said Annuity Board trustees had voted to keep confidential.

Further, Willis expressed his disappointment that the Executive Committee would attempt to dictate policy to another SBC body and make the Annuity Board appear to be in favor of abortion.

Most subcommittee members sat in stunned silence during Willis' fiery speech. Afterward, several attempted to downplay the subcommittee's earlier discussions.

Several expounded on their opposition to divulging any salary information, and one offered an apology to the Annuity Board for what had happened.

But even so, the recommendation to chastise the Annuity Board on the abortion issue was passed and sent on to the full Executive Committee.

At some point between that afternoon meeting and the evening session of the full Executive Committee, Powell presented subcommittee chairman Guy Sanders a statement. When he stood to present the subcommittee's report, Sanders read Powell's statement and then called for a motion to delete from the budget recommendation the censure of the Annuity Board. That motion was made and carried unanimously.

Powell's statement reads: "The Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention has long held a position of opposition to the wanton destruction of life inherent in the practice of abortions. Several years ago the trustees approved a staff recommendation to deny medical plan benefits for abortion. In our investment decisions we will avoid, or divest in orderly fashion, equities in any company that is found to have a service or product that is publicly perceived as uniquely aiding, supporting, or promoting abortion. This commitment (See ANNUITY BOARD, page 9)



Dellanna O'Brien (right), executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), dons a Mississippi Baptist disaster relief cap and jacket to help an unidentified woman in Cleveland fill drink containers during the recent Delta ice storm disaster relief response. Mississippi Baptists supplied thousands of meals to stranded Delans, and the state WMU's newly-formed disaster relief unit was activated for the first time. (Photo by Marjean Patterson)

## WMU disaster relief marks first activation

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Baptist women volunteers were activated for the first time as the newly-formed disaster relief team of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) was called into service after an early February ice storm ravaged the northwest portion of the state.

The team's new Itasca motor home, fully self-contained and equipped to support a sizable contingent of women volunteers, also rolled into a disaster area for the first time, according to state WMU Director Marjean Patterson.

Patterson said the unit left its storage facility at Camp Garaywa in Clinton on Feb. 11 and joined the Enterprise Church disaster relief feeding unit in Greenville.

The women moved to Cleveland a few days later when Mississippi Baptists' 18-wheel mobile kitchen arrived there after three weeks of feeding Californians left homeless by the Jan. 17 earthquake in Los Angeles, she added.

"The women were mostly helping get Red Cross Emergency Response Vehicles (ERV) organized and loaded with meals for delivery to people affected by the ice storm. They were all working without electricity," Patterson said.

Some of the women also accompanied the ERV units into the field to help distribute the meals, she pointed out.

Patterson said the women volunteers were very pleased with the working relationship that quickly developed between themselves

and the male volunteers who have staffed the huge mobile kitchen for years.

"We were gratified by the welcome we received from the men. We want this unit to be a part of the total Mississippi Baptist disaster relief program, and we were pleased that the men and women meshed so well," she said.

Jan Cossitt, consultant in the Mississippi WMU Department and staff coordinator for women's disaster relief, said the motor home proved functional on its first real-life response.

"We found it very useful. If there's nothing available (electricity and other utilities), we can still function," she said.

Patterson said WMU plans to get more women trained in time for the next disaster relief response, especially in the crucial areas of child care, nursing, and clothing distribution.

Patterson also appealed to Baptists for help in paying off the final portion of the debt incurred to purchase the women's motor home.

"The balance on the motor home is about \$26,500. The motor home is now in service, and we'd like to pay it off as soon as we can," she said.

To make a contribution or to get more information on women's disaster relief, contact Cossitt at Mississippi WMU Department, MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530; phone, (601) 968-3800.

(See related item, page 9)

## MC trustees narrow search

Mississippi College trustees expect to name a permanent president for the Clinton-based school by the end of March, according to a report published in the Feb. 24 edition of *The Clinton News* newspaper.

The article, written by Maybelle G. Cagle, quoted Interim President Rory Lee as saying that trustees have reduced the list of applicants to 12-15 people with the help of a

Washington, D.C. consulting firm, Hedrick and Struggles.

Lee, who has held a number of positions during his 22 years at the Baptist-affiliated college and is a candidate for the president's job, was named interim president in August of 1993 after then-president Lewis Nobles resigned under pressure amid allegations of embezzlement. Nobles' case is pending in federal court in Jackson.



# CBF to create foundation to tap charitable giving

NASHVILLE (BP) — A Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Foundation to raise endowment funds for the organization of Baptist moderates was approved during the CBF coordinating council meeting Feb. 17-19 in Nashville.

An ad hoc committee that drafted the proposal now will formulate a charter and bylaws to be presented at the council's May 3-4 meeting prior to the CBF General Assembly May 5-7 in Greensboro, N.C. No General Assembly vote will be needed on the foundation, CBF leaders said.

The council also approved a \$5.6 million budget for the first

half of 1995, including \$2 million expected from its global missions offering. The CBF is then scheduled to move to a July 1-June 30-based fiscal year budget.

A one-time \$100,000 gift to the Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention is included in the budget. The gift was designated by the council's global missions group, voicing appreciation for WMU's contribution to world evangelization.

The \$100,000 grant to WMU was initiated solely by the CBF global missions group, CBF missions coordinator R. Keith Parks told the council, and WMU had no

knowledge such a gift was being made.

The CBF-WMU relationship "is as wholesome as it could possibly be," Parks said, noting the only area where WMU policy rules out missions education assistance to CBF is in promotion of the CBF missions offering each December. The "ultimate health" of Baptist life, Parks said, depends on solid missions awareness such as fostered by WMU.

The Jan. 1-June 30, 1995, budget anticipates \$8.9 million in receipts from all sources, with nearly \$3.28 million to be forwarded as designated to Southern Baptist Convention, state Baptist conventions, and other causes.

The six-month CBF budget includes:

— \$4.2 million for various CBF missions efforts.

— \$100,000 each for the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond and the George W. Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor University and \$15,000 each for Baptist study centers at Duke University and Emory University's

Candler School of Theology.

— \$137,134 for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

— \$30,000 for the Baptist Center for Ethics.

— \$65,000 for Associated Baptist Press.

— \$45,000 for the Baptist World Alliance.

— \$202,250 for general and administrative expenses and \$184,050 for communications.

Cecil Sherman, CBF coordinator, voiced several concerns to the council.

Of continued CBF growth, he said, "I don't think that can be presumed. It will be increasingly difficult for churches to come to CBF. What we are asking people to do has penalty attached to it...." It runs counter to the desire of pastors and lay people to avoid controversy, he said. "This is not a peaceful exercise." In some instances, CBF may need to start churches where there are no CBF-oriented churches, he said.

He said he is not sure the average Baptist understands "the difference between a CBF Baptist and

a Baptist of the old order." He defined CBF, in "compressed" fashion, saying, "We are not a theology-standardizing organization. We are a missions delivery system." The latter, he said, is "appropriate to Baptists, the other is altogether inappropriate."

"CBF needs to design a mission to the clergy," he said, noting ministerial flight from the profession as a result of "the moral breakdown, the fatigue burnout, the church-pastor confrontation that leads to dismissal in way too many instances."

The council also heard a report that Gary Leazer, former director of the Home Mission Board's Interfaith Witness Department who was asked to resign over his involvements in the Freemasonry issue, will receive \$2,000 per month for six months from the CBF's "safety net" fund.

The nominating committee reported that Patrick Anderson, a professor at Florida Southern College, Lakeland, Fla., will be recommended as moderator-elect to the General Assembly in May.

## Fellowship releases financial projections

NASHVILLE (ABP) — The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship appointed five missionaries, approved five new staff positions, released a financial update and forecast, and announced plans for its 1994 general assembly.

Those were among the actions taken by the Coordinating Council, the 83-member group that directs the Fellowship's work. The council met Feb. 17-19 in Nashville.

An appointment service during the three-day meeting sent five new workers to the mission field, bringing to 31 the number of Fellowship missionaries.

— Tom and Beth Ogburn will be strategic coordinators for an unreached people group in an unspecified country in Asia. He is from Birmingham, Ala., and she is from Murfreesboro, N.C.

— Sam and Latha Bandela, natives of India, will work with the Chamblee-Doraville International Project, which ministers to internationals in northeast Atlanta.

— Rachel Stephen of Sonora, Texas, was commissioned for a two-year assignment teaching English as a second language in the Czech Republic.

Five staff positions were approved — a chief financial officer, a computer systems manager, an associate for missions education, and two secretaries to support the global missions staff. Once filled the five staffers will join the 12 people already on the Atlanta-based staff.

CBF leaders also released figures outlining its financial growth and gave a forecast for future growth. Contributions to the Fellowship have grown rapidly in the past three years — from \$4.5 million in 1991 to \$11.2 million last year. While about a third of the money is designated by donors for traditional Southern Baptist causes, the rest funds the Fellowship and other moderate-backed ministries. The Fellowship spends about three fourths of the money at its disposal on global missions.

The report showed, among other things, that six states account for 70% of all Fellowship support — Texas, 20.0%; North Carolina, 15.0%; Georgia, 11.7%; Tennessee, 8.5%; South Carolina, 7.7%; and Virginia, 7.4%.

All six are historically strong Southern Baptist states, combining for 47% of all 1993 gifts to traditional Southern Baptist causes like the Cooperative Program.

In Mississippi, 64 individuals contributed \$56,549, and 22 churches contributed \$102,577.

In years past, moderate leaders said the independent nature of conservative churches made them less likely to fund the Southern Baptist Convention. But Cecil Sherman, CBF coordinator, said he is alarmed by a new phenomenon — "the rise of independent moderate Baptist churches."

"Far more moderate Baptist churches are just backing off of cooperative missions than are coming to CBF," he said. "They are privatizing church.... The privatizing of church life is the death of cooperative mission."

Despite the Fellowship's growth, still only a fraction of the nation's Southern Baptist churches support the organization — 3.2% nationwide. The highest concentration is in Virginia, where 14.1% of the churches fund the Fellowship directly.

In the past year, growth of the Fellowship has been strongest in Virginia, which went from 84 supporting churches to 216. Texas churches increased from 119 to 165. And the list of North Carolina churches grew from 150 to 221. Those three states posted the largest dollar increases as well.

But contributions grew faster in some unlikely places. Gifts from Illinois Baptists increased eightfold, from \$554 in 1992 to \$6,125. Contributions also grew significantly in Hawaii (\$824 to \$6,057), Arkansas (\$59,145 to \$154,683), and Georgia (\$744,066 to \$1,088,564).

Keynote speakers for CBF's general assembly May 5-7 in Greensboro, N.C., include an African-American and a female pastor — William A. Jones, pastor of Bethany Church, Brooklyn, N.Y., and Julie Pennington-Russell, pastor of Nineteenth Avenue Church, San Francisco. Pennington-Russell's church was excluded from the California Southern Baptist Convention last fall by conservatives who oppose women as pastors.

## Casinos as top liquor purchasers may signal ominous trends, observer says

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Mississippi's casinos dominating the state's liquor purchases for the last half of 1993, according to figures released by the Alcoholic Beverage Control Division of the Mississippi State Tax Commission.

Casinos occupied 17 of the top 20 places on the list, which identified total cases purchased by organizations licensed to distribute liquor by the drink in Mississippi. Beer and package store figures were not included on the list.

Gulfport's Grand Casino, currently the state's largest gambling facility and number one on the Tax Commission list, bought nearly 7,700 cases of liquor between July and December of last year.

Splash Casino in Tunica County was a distant second, with almost 3,350 cases purchased during the same period.

Amerigo Restaurant in Ridgeland was the first non-casino operation to crack the list at number 13, with nearly 1,100 cases.

Paul G. Jones II, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention's Christian Action Commission, said no one should be surprised since most casinos ply patrons with free drinks while they gamble.

"As early as 1988, we were warning legislators and county voters about the radical increase in alcohol consumption that goes along with legalized casino gambling," he pointed out.

Jones said recent sales figures reveal other sectors of Mississippi's liquor industry are stagnant, but casino purchases are "going through the roof."

"While consumers are moderating their intake of alcohol for health and other reasons, casinos are adding to society's problems by giving away huge amounts of free alcoholic beverages. It's a frightening picture of what casinos are doing to our state," he said.

To underscore his tragic message, Jones pointed to a recent fatality in the parking lot of a Gulf Coast casino, where a man drowned after he drove his car over a guard rail and into the water. His blood-alcohol level was nearly 2.5 times the legal limit for operating a motor vehicle in Mississippi.

Jones said he believes addictive tendencies are linked, which means compulsive people may not be able to control one addictive behavior (drinking) while in-

dulging another (gambling).

As another example, Jones said some casinos have installed high-tech air filtration systems to handle the massive amounts of smoke created by tobacco use — another addictive behavior.

"All of this plays into an addictive personality," he pointed out.

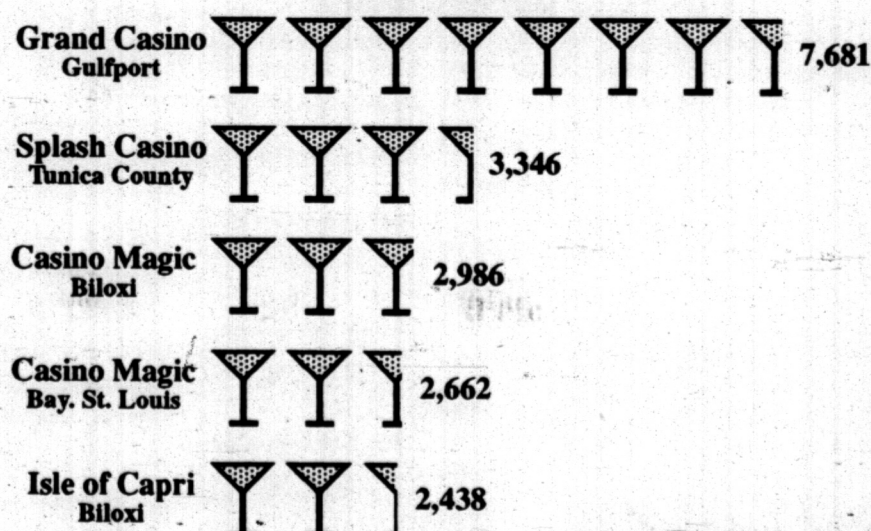
Jones foresees more alcohol-related crime, accidents, work absenteeism, and social problems because of the increase in consumption around casinos. In addition, he believes local businesses will suffer.

"Casinos have a dangerous edge on liquor use. While normally-permitted businesses like restaurants charge for their drinks, legislators have one-upped these local businesses by allowing casinos to give away liquor," he said.

### Liquor and casinos

July-December 1993

each glass = 1,000 cases



Source: Miss. State Tax Comm.



# Nine Executive Committee members part of strategy group

By Greg Warner

NASHVILLE (ABP) — Some members of the Executive Committee, which directs much of the work of the national denomination, are also heavily involved in the political battle for control of the 36 Baptist state conventions.

State-level strategists held another closed-door meeting Feb. 23, but this time the group included at least nine members of the Executive Committee and its chairman, Fred Wolfe, who is also a candidate for SBC president.

The state strategists have met at least four times during the last 18 months in their continuing effort to extend fundamental-conservative control to the states.

Members of the powerful Executive Committee have participated in all four meetings, but this time the gathering was held in the shadow of the Executive Committee building one day after the committee's winter meeting. The invitation-only crowd included all three of the elected officers of the committee.

Executive Committee chairman Fred Wolfe, who announced Feb. 8 he will be a candidate for SBC president this summer, attended. So did vice chairman Eldridge Miller, a pastor from Sallisaw, Okla.

## Pinckney organized meeting

T.C. Pinckney, the committee's secretary, organized the meeting and the three earlier ones, although he said he did not issue the invitations this time.

Pinckney, a retired Air Force general from Alexandria, Va., said the meeting was a loosely structured, informal gathering of Baptists who are active in their state conventions. In the past he said the group is not seeking to draft a national strategy for gaining control of the state conventions but merely to "exchange experiences."

Organizers refused to open the meeting to reporters. Napkins were taped over the windows of the room at the Clubhouse Inn, a Nashville hotel adjacent to the Executive Committee building.

A similar group of Baptist leaders asked Wolfe to seek the presidency, the candidate said in making his bid public Feb. 8.

It is not known, however, if Wolfe's candidacy was discussed at the Nashville meeting. But it was discussed during the two-day Executive Committee meeting that preceded it.

Morris Chapman, committee president and former SBC president, asked the group to pray for Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Church, Mobile, Ala. He urged members of the committee to "commit ourselves in prayer to Brother Fred" and others who might be nominated.

## Who will lead?

Conservatives, who usually have united behind a consensus candidate for president, are divided this year over who will carry their banner for the post, which has been key to the conservative rise to power in the SBC.

Jim Henry, pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla. — the city that will host the June SBC meeting — said Feb. 7 he too is considering the position.

That prompted Executive Committee member J.C. Mitchell, also from the Orlando area, to ask for equal time the next day.

"I just feel in the spirit of fairness, and aware of what Morris Chapman said last night, we should pray for Jim Henry," Mitchell told the committee as it wrapped up its meeting with prayer. "This is not an endorsement. But Jim Henry is in the throes of a decision."

Wolfe, presiding at the committee meeting, said he already is praying for Henry. "I am not praying that he will not run. I am praying God will lead him."

Both Wolfe and Henry have been leaders of the SBC fundamental-conservative movement. Wolfe has taken a high-profile role in the politicking and has collected endorsements from several recent SBC presidents. Henry, meanwhile, has kept some dis-

tance from the political fray and is expected to attract support from Baptists disenchanted with denominational politics.

Moderate Baptists are not expected to field a candidate this year.

## Meeting is third in a string

The Feb. 23 meeting was the second the state strategists have held in Nashville. The other was last February at Two Rivers Church, again on the heels of the winter Executive Committee meeting.

The group's first was held at Bellevue Church, Memphis, Tenn., in August 1992. The other was in Louisville, Ky., last October, immediately after the inauguration of Albert Mohler as president of Southern Seminary in Louisville. Mohler's election was viewed as a victory for fundamental-conservatives.

Executive Committee members attending the most recent meeting include: John Click of Wichita, Kan.; Reuel May of Jackson, Miss.; Gibbie McMillan of Baton Rouge, La.; Miller; William Parker of Lake Mary, Fla.; Pinckney; Guy Sanders of Lake Wales, Fla.; Jim Wells of Lee's Summit, Mo.; and Wolfe.

Others attending included Ken Barnett, a former Executive Committee member from Lakewood, Colo.; LaVerne Butler, president of Mid-Continent Baptist Bible College in Mayfield, Ky.; and Jim Richards, a pastor from Baton Rouge and trustee of the SBC Christian Life Commission.

Several of the 40 state Baptist conventions already are under control of fundamental-conservatives but others have rejected their political overtures. Fundamental-conservatives have held sway at the Executive Committee for a decade and have controlled the SBC presidential election since 1979.

Warner is editor, Associated Baptist Press. Bob Terry of the Missouri WORD & WAY contributed to this story.

# Walker tackles religion in schools

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. (ABP) — Failure to teach about religion in public schools is as wrong as advancing religion in them, a Baptist church-state specialist said recently.

"Religion should be taught within its appropriate historical, cultural, and pedagogical context," said Brent Walker, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee in Washington, D.C.

Speaking at a high school forum in Williamsport, Pa., on equal access for religious views in public schools, Walker said courses in art, music, literature, and history "will offer natural opportunities to include discussion about religious influences."

Students are generally more free

than teachers to express and exercise their religion, Walker said. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that teachers, as government representatives, cannot engage in religious indoctrination, proselytize or lead devotionals.

But, he said, permissible teaching about religion includes:

- an academic, not devotional, approach to religion;

- an aim of enhancing awareness of religion without pressing for acceptance;

- a study that does not involve the practice of religion;

- exposure to diversity of views without promotion, denigration, or imposition of a particular one; and

- information about beliefs

that does not seek conformity.

The Baptist Joint Committee, along with others, led the fight for the 1984 Equal Access Act that allows for Bible clubs or religious groups to have the same access to meet on campus before and after school as other non-curriculum groups.

If a school district allows the "Young Republicans" to meet, it must also allow the "Young Baptists" to meet, Walker said.

However, if the school district forbids non-curriculum related clubs, then equal access is not triggered, he added.

School personnel may not sponsor the clubs or direct them, but they may attend in a non-participatory capacity, he said.

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## Southern president greets alumni leader

R. Albert Mohler Jr. (right), president of Southern Seminary, greeted Ray Lloyd Jr., president of the seminary's Mississippi alumni, during a recent meeting of alumni leaders at the Louisville, Ky., seminary. Lloyd is pastor of First Church, Starkville. (SBTS photo by Catherine Winn)

## Young "laterals" findings of SBC study committees

NASHVILLE (ABP) — Task forces announced 17 months ago have completed their critique of the various program areas of the Southern Baptist Convention, Ed Young told members of the SBC Executive Committee Feb. 22.

"Now I'm lateraling this to the Executive Committee," said Young, pastor of Second Church, Houston, who completes his service as SBC president this June.

Young, an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee, arrived near the end of the group's recent two-day meeting in Nashville.

Young rattled off what he called "thumbnail" reports of the nine task forces he appointed to study denominational programs and suggest new areas of Southern Baptist ministry for the next century. His remarks, he said, were "thoughts" and "not recommendations."

Areas touched on in Young's remarks included:

- Relationships with other Baptists. Young's "cords and stakes" task force was given a two-fold assignment in 1992: to approach "like-minded" churches about support of Southern Baptist evangelism efforts and to study implementation of recommendations in the 1987 SBC Peace Committee report.

Young reported the group suggested publishing an informational piece to describe how a church can affiliate with the SBC. Earlier in the meeting, the Executive Committee's convention relations workgroup distributed a draft copy of such a document.

"The day of bitterness is generally over" between Southern Baptists and independent fundamentalists, Young said. "They like who we are. They like where we're going and they're ready to come home to a Bible-believing denomination."

- Urban missions. "There's

one area I'm really not satisfied with," Young said.

Some in Young's audience disagreed with his conclusions. Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis confronted Young after the session.

Asked to respond to Young on the record, Lewis told Associated Baptist Press, "I certainly agree with his concern for the cities." However he said Young "may not be aware we do have a long-established strategy" for reaching cities — the HMB's Mega-Focus Cities process which involves population centers of 1 million or more in goal-setting for church planting, evangelism, and cooperation across agency lines.

— The denominational press. Young urged Southern Baptists to "work to change the negative, critical slant" of the denominational press.

Young singled out the practice of investigative reporting, which he said is inappropriate in Christian publications. "I should not seek to uncover anything about your life and publicize it in a negative way," he said.

"There are too many great things happening in the kingdom of God for us to give attention to 15 people over here....," Young said.

Jack Brymer, editor of the Florida Baptist Witness and past president of the Southern Baptist Press Association, said Young's comments on both the Baptist press and other areas of work "reflect gross ignorance" of denominational life.

"Probably 90% of the information in Baptist state papers is positive," Brymer said. "The overwhelming majority of space is given to reporting on missions. Apparently he does not read Baptist state papers. Otherwise he could not make such a statement."

## Churches adopt Expanded Annuity Plan

The following churches have adopted the Expanded Annuity Plan since those reported in the Feb. 3 issue of *The Baptist Record*: Lincoln: Ruth; Rankin: Dry Creek; and Webster: Mt. Zion.



# capsules

**SKATER TONYA HARDING ATTENDS CHURCH, GOES TO ALTAR TO SEEK GOD'S FORGIVENESS: PORTLAND, Ore. (EP)** — Olympic skater Tonya Harding, infamous for her alleged role in the attack on rival Nancy Kerrigan, was a surprise visitor to First Church of the Nazarene in southwest Portland Feb. 13. Through most of the service, Harding sat unnoticed in the balcony with the David Webber family and their daughter, Stephanie Quintero, with whom she lives. But according to the **Portland Oregonian**, news of her presence quickly spread through the congregation as she rose and went forward to accept Christ during an invitation at the end of the service. As Harding left the church, Gary A. Henecke, pastor of the evangelical church, told her, "Now you are not only skating for America, but are skating for Christ." Henecke told Harding that she would be in his prayers.

**DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION LESS IMPORTANT TO INDIVIDUALS: WILLOWDALE, Ontario (EP)** — Experts believe there will be 25,000 religious denominations by the year 2000, but according to an article in Canadian magazine *Faith Today*, denominational affiliation seems to hold less importance for individual believers than it once did. The decline in the importance of denominations is the result of a cultural decline in loyalty in general, and a coinciding "cynical view of institutions," says Don Posterski, vice-president of national programs for World Vision Canada. "The church is an institution, so why do we think it's going to escape cynicism?" Denominations historically came about because of differences in theology and doctrine, but those elements are becoming less important as people choose churches based on the meeting of their own needs, as opposed to denomination. As a result, denominations have had to find new roles for themselves beyond defending a particular interpretation of the Christian faith. Among the new roles is coordination of large projects individual churches could not handle alone.

**MURDER OF BAPTISTS COUNTED AMONG EXAMPLES OF PERSECUTION: WASHINGTON (BP)** — Religious persecution was the motive behind a mass murder of Baptists on New Year's Eve in Tajikistan, according to on-site testimony reported to a U.S. congressional commission. An ethnic Russian Baptist, Vladimir Limorev, and eight others — including his four children — were brutally beaten, then killed or left to die in a burning home in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, a former Soviet republic in Central Asia. Limorev and his family were active members of Dushanbe Baptist Church. During a Feb. 16 Capitol Hill briefing, a former Soviet political prisoner listed the nine victims among 16 people confirmed as Christian martyrs in 1992-93 in areas of the former Soviet Union. The briefing speaker, Boris Perchatkin, is president of the Russian-American Institute for Adaptation, which has offices in Portland, Ore., and Moscow. The institute serves as a voice for Christians in the former Soviet Union in danger for their faith. Perchatkin named a total of 34 Christians severely beaten or martyred for their faith during the past two years.

## Christian radio: cheap, effective medium quadruples its influence

By Mark O'Keefe

WASHINGTON (BP) — Randall Terry, Operation Rescue founder on his "Randall Terry Live" radio broadcast at the recent National Religious Broadcasters meeting, answering a man at a microphone, said the worst thing President Clinton has done is approving "killing the babies...."

What is the best thing the president has done? the man asked.

Silence. More silence.

Stumped, Terry tossed the question back to a crowd of about 20 people watching his show from the NRB convention floor in Washington in late January. "He created more interest in national Christian radio than any other president in the history of the nation," said one man, stepping up to a hand-held microphone.

Terry and dozens of other Bible-quoting radio personalities can give a big Amen to that.

Christian radio is hot. It's also inexpensive, immediate, and influential, able to light up Capitol Hill and statehouse switchboards within minutes.

It is the third most common radio format in the country, trailing only country and adult contemporary, according to the *M Street Journal*, which monitors the radio industry.

Since President Bill Clinton took office, the number of religious TV stations has dropped 2%, to 274. But religious radio has shown an 11% increase, to 1,566 stations, according to the Directory of Religious Media.

Since 1980, it has grown 33%. Since 1970, it's up 422%.

It may be the religious right's most underrated weapon.

Not all the stations and their programs are political. Many try to inspire with music and traditional teachings from the Bible, including "The Baptist Hour" and a range of

other programs produced by the Radio and Television Commission, as well as "In Touch" Bible preaching on more than 500 radio stations by Charles Stanley, pastor of Atlanta's First Church.

But dozens of evangelical call-in and talk shows tackle public policy issues with the belief that they must inform and save the nation from crumbling in a heap of immorality. A few are carried on secular stations. But most preach to the choir on religious radio.

Among them: "Beverly LaHaye Live." LaHaye, founder of Concerned Women for America and a member of Montrose Church in suburban Washington, is heard on 90 stations nationally. Her daily, half-hour program was launched in 1990.

Randall Terry is a relatively tiny upstart. His two-year-old show, normally broadcast from Windsor, N.Y., is on 32 stations.

He sees radio as a way to mobilize America's 40 million evangelical Christians.

The king of Christian talk radio is psychologist James Dobson of "Focus on the Family." His daily show is carried around the world by more than 4,000 stations.

When his show began in 1977, Dobson was like a Christian Dr. Spock, concentrating almost exclusively on child-rearing issues. But Dobson has increasingly added political causes to his agenda. For example, in recent weeks, Dobson has devoted five shows in an attempt to toughen child pornography laws. He has alleged Attorney General Janet Reno's proposed modification of the laws would allow sexually suggestive poses of clothed children.

Dobson defends his increasing, sometimes criticized activism against government policies. "I want to tell you folks, I am pre-

pared to pay with my life," Dobson said.

Dobson receives up to 50,000 letters a week. His political thoughts affect millions.

Marlin Maddoux, a Christian talk show host, speaks to nearly 3 million listeners weekly on more than 280 stations. His guest during one broadcast from the NRB was William J. Bennett, President Reagan's secretary of education and drug czar.

"We have a crisis in America," Bennett said. "But it has to do with the things we've been talking about, families and values. It's not about health care. We have the best health care system in the world."

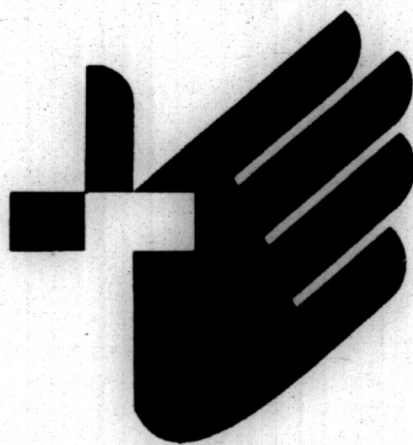
The right's radio weapon could be weakened by a congressional push to reinstate the Fairness Doctrine, which, prior to its repeal in 1987, required broadcasters to present opposing points of view on "controversial issues of public importance."

The religious broadcasters are battling that move, calling it the Unfairness Doctrine. It would, according to NRB President Brandt Gustavson, take broadcasting "backwards to political intimidation, censorship of debate, and boring, ineffective commentary about issues no one really cares about."

Stuart Epperson, owner of a Chesapeake-Portsmouth, Va., Christian radio station, said small stations fearful of expensive battles with the government would be especially reluctant to air provocative programming.

"It's harassment," Epperson said of the threat to bring back the Fairness Doctrine.

O'Keefe is religion and ethics reporter for THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT in Norfolk, Va. Used by permission. Art Toalston added Southern Baptist-related information to this article.



### IT'S YOUR SERVE

Minister in Christ's  
Name

1994 Season of  
Home Missions

• Week of Prayer for  
Home Missions  
March 6-13, 1994

## All-American long jumper rouses young men to "keep pressing on"

GATLINBURG, Tenn. (BP) — All-American long jumper and sprinter Clyde Duncan roused more than 700 youths at this year's national High School Baptist Young Men's Rally to "keep pressing on" and "use what you've learned here to help someone else through the storm."

In line with the rally theme, "Never Alone," based on Matt. 28:20, Duncan said, "Jesus will never leave you nor forsake you, he will never abandon you, so when hard times come, you know what to do. Keep pressing on." The Feb. 4-6 rally was held in Gatlinburg, Tenn.

Duncan told of his own experience in "turning tragedy into triumph."

"I had posted a long jump of 27 feet before the (1992) Barcelona Olympics, only to tear a tendon in my right knee before the trials," he said. "There was discouragement,

sadness, pain, and even anger. But the Word tells us to be angry, but sin not. I didn't give up."

Duncan still went to Barcelona, but found himself in "a different venue."

"I was asked to be an assistant chaplain to the athletes, and I probably reached more people than I would have had I been competing."

While he recuperated after reconstructive surgery, Duncan's grade point average soared to a near-perfect 3.8, and he began to speak at Christian youth functions. And Duncan hasn't given up the dream of competing in the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.

He continues to train in his hometown of Houston while completing a master's degree in sociology at the University of Houston, where he earned his bachelor's degree in communications and was an All-American in track

and field.

The two-day rally also featured conferences with titles that ranged from "Giving Your Faith Away" to "How To Raise Your Parents" and a hands-on mission project directed by M.B. Howard, national coordinator for volunteers on construction projects throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

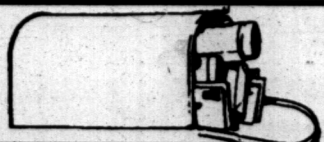
Howard supervised as the youths assembled and painted toys from handcrafted wood parts. The toys will be given to churches in Mexico and the Gatlinburg area.

This year's rally attendance of 729 was an all-time record. The event reflected the sponsoring Brotherhood Commission's phase-out of the High School Baptist Young Men and Pioneer Royal Ambassador programs and the launch of Challengers, which will add young men in grades seven through nine when it begins in October.

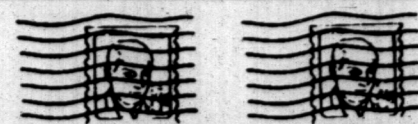


Clyde Duncan Jr., collegiate All-American long jumper and sprinter, urged more than 700 youths at the 1994 High School Baptist Young Men's Rally to "use what you've learned here to help someone else through the storm." The three-day rally program also included conferences, hands-on missions projects, and Christian entertainers. (Brotherhood Commission photo by Shelley Smith)





# Letters to the editor



## Thanks from Delta

Editor:

On Feb. 9, much of the Mississippi Delta was hit with what experts are calling the worst ice storm in 40 years. Cleveland, along with other Delta communities, was devastated. Power line poles were snapped like toothpicks, leaving much of the Delta without power. Consequently, most families had no heat, no means of cooking food, and no drinking water as well as no lights. This condition continued

until Feb. 16 when a few people received power. Still others will not receive power before early March.

This condition provided opportunity for many wonderful acts of mercy and neighborliness. Jim Didlake and the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief crew provided tremendous help. In addition to preparing thousands of meals, Jim's office helped direct "clean up" crews to areas where need was greatest.

At this time I do not have available all the associations in Missis-

issippi which responded by sending clean-up crews. Our Baptist men and women from across this state came to our aid in true good Samaritan form. Please allow me this means of saying thank you to all those who came to our aid in Cleveland, Miss.

Doyle Cummings, DOM  
Bolivar Association

## Threw out the tube

Editor:

I dared and it made a difference!

Having grown up on a farm in the '30s and '40s without the noise-makers we have now, I knew what peace and quiet were like. So few experience quietness in these thunderous and evil days.

As a mother of five healthy, active children during the 1970s, and seeking to guide them by godly standards, I was very displeased and angered by their being allowed by their father to view so much television. I had asked, pled, and talked to my husband about the detrimental effect of TV on our children's lives. This did not make him change his mind or habit of watching TV and allowing the children to watch also.

Our children were taken to church with regularity and I sought to teach them at home also. It was my practice to keep a Bible verse posted on the wall near the table where we ate. I still do this.

After much prayer and distress about the influence of TV in our home, one day in 1974 I was listening to the radio broadcast "Back to the Bible." Theodore Epp was teaching about the harmful effects of TV in people's lives in America. God spoke so loud and clearly to me through him and I purposed in my heart that the TV set was going out of our home until our children were grown.

I unplugged "that thing!" When our middle son came home that afternoon he helped me move it outside. When my husband came home that evening I met him at the door. I said quite emphatically, "There's the TV. You can do what you want with it, but it is not coming back in this house until the children are grown."

He didn't challenge me, and took it over to his office. It remained there for five or six years.

The children didn't really miss "the thing." They were occupied

with other wholesome activities and were able to concentrate on their homework without the distraction caused by TV.

Our home atmosphere changed immediately for the better! There was a peace and pleasantness between us. I firmly believe that demon spirits were harassing me through the instrument of television.

We have TV in our home today. It is a very rare occasion that it is turned on during the daylight hours.

I purposed in my heart a long time ago that I would not be mesmerized by TV and I prefer to not even have one in our home. I hate the evil of it and the evil effects it has on precious lives.

Carlene P. Dodson  
Columbus

## Lives have changed

Editor:

It was disturbing to read the article entitled, "Baptists face leadership crisis" (Dec. 2), since our family has been touched by this issue in recent months. My husband and another staff member were fired in August by the pastor of our church without warning. There was no tangible explanation given for the actions taken, yet there was no question of the integrity, moral character, work ethic, or loyalty of either minister. Our lives have been irreversibly changed and our hearts have been broken. I still do not understand the motivation behind the actions of our pastor. I do know that my husband's ministerial future has been placed in serious jeopardy by a man who seems to have no accountability for the decisions he makes. I pray that Southern Baptists will open their eyes to the deterioration of our leadership and begin to hold accountable those pastors who seek to "play God."

Name withheld by editor

# It's Your Serve.

If you play tennis, you know that the person serving has an advantage. But that doesn't make the game easier for the server. When the ball is in your court, the pressure is on. It's up to you to make things happen.

As we enter the 1994 Season of Home Missions, Southern Baptists are being called upon to meet the challenge of home missions in America.

By supporting the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, you can help home missionaries meet the spiritual,

emotional, and physical needs of others. The ball is in your court. It's your serve.

**Give to the Annie Armstrong  
Easter Offering for Home Missions.**

**National Goal: \$40 million**



**IT'S YOUR SERVE**

Mission in Christ's Name

## Tell the Good News

More than 600 recently attended the banquet of the Hinds-Madison Association for World Missions. The kick-off was Tom Larrimore, Bill Clark, and Wilmer Holifield singing "His Love is a Boundless Love." Later a ladies ensemble from Midway Church sang, "All to Jesus I Surrender." The New Life Fellowship Church choir sang "Walk in Jerusalem." The singing was uplifting and greatly appreciated.

Unlike the missionary who complained he was sent 75 miles beyond the Great Commission, the missionaries this night were right on target. Fran Robinson told of working as a nurse on trips to Honduras and Nicaragua. Bruce Tarbet, Clinton locksmith, worked in Ukraine and Kenya. Mac Baker, Raymond, spoke of the volunteer work in Alaska. His "hammer and saw" teams were there to back him up. Kay Wilson witnessed of the eight Mississippi College teachers who worked for a week on Hama Island, off the south coast of China.

Dozens of retired missionaries and active missionaries were there with upward of 900 years of missionary service. Jerry Rankin, president of the Foreign Mission Board, was the closing speaker. The Clinton native expressed appreciation for the mission interest exhibited: "You nurtured me," said Rankin, "from the time I walked the campus at Mississippi College, cruised Capitol Street, and ate at the White House Grill in Van Winkle." Rankin declared God "to be moving through the turmoil and daily events of the world, and mission results can be seen in Mongolia, Albania, and the old Russian federation. We will surpass the 4,000 mark in the missionaries under appointment at our next appointment service and we now work in 176 countries — we do not have missionaries living on the field in all countries where we have work."

"Making a World of Difference" was the banquet's theme. The group present, many of whom helped begin churches in the heat of Africa to the steeples of Russia, from southern Argentina to northern Europe and Alaska, are the kind of people who make a difference wherever they go. — GH





## LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ed.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*I am retired and find that I have no more energy to serve my church. I love my church, but I can't seem to find joy any longer. Should I change churches?*

Throughout life, we come to times of reflection when we must stop and evaluate. Retirement is one of those times. We need to pause, contemplate our next step, and prayerfully consider our options. Make a list of the things you enjoy the most and the things you dislike about your church work. List short-term goals (within the next year) and long-term goals (within five years). By determining what you want to accomplish, you are in fact looking at possible new challenges. Change is good and your frustration right now may be an indication that you are preparing to head in a new direction. This is exciting and healthy because it motivates us to grow and keeps us from becoming lazy or burned out. See your frustration as a springboard into something new and refreshing.

*My wife's parents are still trying to run her life even though we have been married 15 years. They belittle me and imply that*

*she should not have married me. I've made mistakes, but I love my wife and we are working to put the past behind us and grow in our Christian life. Her parents do not encourage us at all.*

Parents want the best for their children and often have the highest expectations for them. It is difficult to accept when children do not live up to those expectations. You may never live up to your in-laws' expectations, especially if those expectations are too high or unrealistic. Your first concern must be for whom you want to please and serve. You must model a Christian walk that shows love for God, your wife, your children, and then others. Keep asking yourself, "What does God want me to do?" As you focus on God, the focus on your wife's parents is removed. Your in-laws will hopefully see the need to be focused on God, but that is their responsibility — not yours. We often try hard to please others or ourselves before honoring God, but by focusing on him we take a stand and make an unshakeable statement. Give yourself time, and run the race that God has set before you (Heb. 12:1).

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name and address not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

## BSSB providing VBS materials for African-American churches

NASHVILLE — For the second year, the Baptist Sunday School Board is making available Vacation Bible School materials developed specifically for African-American churches by an independent publisher.

A 1993 VBS pilot project with Urban Ministries Inc. (UMI) of Chicago showed positive results, according to Elgia Wells, manager of the BSSB black church development section.

"Jesus Shows Me the Way" is

the theme for the 1994 UMI materials, which are available for all age groups, preschool through adults. Materials include an introductory kit, director and teacher resource kits, student and teacher manuals, craft booklets, videos, and other items.

The UMI VBS materials are available through Baptist Book Stores and Lifeway Christian Stores or by calling the board's customer service center, 1-800-458-2772.

## Day of Prayer workers sought

Regional and local coordinators are needed to help organize Mississippi's National Day of Prayer emphasis, set for May 5. A training seminar will be held March 19, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at New Covenant Church, Ridgeland, for individuals interested in participating.

Highlights of the seminar will include a video presentation by Pat Fordice, wife of Mississippi Gov. Kirk Fordice, and addresses by Bishop Knox, suspended principal of Wingfield High School, Jackson; Carl Falster, chair of Foundation for Christian Alternatives; and Steve Bennett, pastor of Colonial Hills Church, Southaven. A con-

cert by Ballet Magnificat's junior company will follow the training session.

To register or for more information, call (601) 857-8409. There is no cost for the seminar. Participants should bring a sack lunch.

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## Just for the Record

Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, will host a "Community Impact Seminar" on March 26, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The seminar is designed to help Christians speak out against public policies which damage families and Christian values. Speakers will be Larry Burtoft, former pastor of Valley Vista (California) Community Church; Alan Crippen II, former development director of International Students, Inc.; John Eldredge, founding editor of Washington Watch; and Greg Jesson, adjunct professor of philosophy of religion, Denver Theological Seminary. Cost is \$20 per person, and includes materials. Call Focus on the Family, sponsor of the event, at 1-800-782-8227 for more information.

A Spring Bible Conference will be held at Park Place Church, Hwy. 80 East, Brandon/Pearl, on March 17. The services will be held from 1:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. Featured speakers will be Al Mohler, president of Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C. For more information, call 939-6282.

The Mississippi College Department of English, with support from the college's honors council, will sponsor a reading by Paul Ruffin, professor of English at Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas, March 8, at 7 p.m. Ruffin, a publisher and poet, will read from

his works in a session held in the Learning Resources Center of the Leland Speed Library. For additional information call 925-3215.

Grandview Church, Pearl, will sponsor a Lay Renewal Weekend on March 18-20. Activities will be held for all ages. Wade Chappell is pastor of Grandview Church. For more information, call 939-4215.

The Mississippi College Department of Music will present the Symphonic Wind Ensemble on March 7 at 8:15 p.m. in Swor Auditorium of Nelson Hall. The Ensemble is under the direction of John Hanbery, professor of music and director of bands.

## Revival Dates

**New Hope (Oktibbeha):** March 6-9; Carroll Robertson, evangelist.

**Mashulaville, Macon:** March 13-16; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Auzie Sullivan, Louisville, evangelist; Mike Rogers, Louisville, music; Olyn F. Roberts, pastor.

**Grace Chapel (Lebanon):** March 13-18; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner at noon, and 1:30 p.m. service; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Charles Garner, New Augusta, evangelist; Ronnie Clemets, Hattiesburg, music; Thomas W. Kendall, pastor.

**Christ, Greenwood:** March 6-9; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Billy Lee Foley, New Albany, evangelist; Hubert Greer, Hazlehurst, music; L.D. (Joe) Brown Jr., pastor.

**Ebenezer, Bassfield:** March 6-9; Sunday, regular services; 7 p.m. week nights; Milton Scott, Carson, evangelist; Dallas Rayborn, Hattiesburg, music; Alfred Jones, pastor.

**Colonial Heights, Jackson:** March 6-9; Sunday-Wed., 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., lunch served at 11:30 a.m. and mid-day services, 12:10-12:30 p.m.; Bill Stafford, evangelist; Ray Jones, music; call 956-5000 for more information.

## West Marks notes 50th anniversary

Members of West Marks Church, Marks, will celebrate the church's 50th anniversary throughout the month of March. Sunday services will feature former pastors and ministers of music along with highlights from the church's history. The celebration will conclude March 27 with noon luncheon and a concert, beginning at 2 p.m.

Special guests include: March 6, preaching, Ron Kirkland, 11 a.m., Charles Ellis, 6 p.m.; music, Chuck McMinn, both services; March 13, preaching, Olyn Roberts, 11 a.m., Cooper Hartley, 6 p.m.; music, James Harold Aldridge, 11 a.m.; March 20, preaching Billy Joe Pierce, 11 a.m., Calvin Inman, 6 p.m.; music, Mike Barham, both services; March 27, preaching, C.H. Melton, 11 a.m.; and music, Bobby Whittingham.

For more information, call (601) 326-4264.

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## ANNUITY BOARD

From page 3

ment grows out of a deep personal, biblical-based conviction that is shared by the president, the trustees, and the officers of the Annuity Board."

In the 1994-95 CP budget, the Annuity Board will receive \$1.05 million. Like all other SBC agencies, its allocation was reduced 1.23%.

Intertwined with the abortion debate, the same subcommittee also challenged the Annuity Board about violating its program statement. The board's assignment is expressed in three areas: management of retiree annuities, administering a program of ministers' relief, and offering insurance plans and related services.

The subcommittee raised two points of contention. The first charge was that by offering investment management services

to some Baptist agencies and schools, the Annuity Board was encroaching upon the assignment given the foundations.

The second was that the Annuity Board had stepped beyond its assignment by managing annuities for employees of Criswell College, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Criswell and Mid-America are independent schools closely affiliated with Southern Baptist churches. The Fellowship is a group of Southern Baptist moderates displeased with the SBC's new conservative leadership.

Several directors of state Baptist foundations were present at the meeting, and two specifically testified against the Annuity Board. One said he believes the Annuity Board has been aggressively soliciting schools in his state and therefore working against the state foundation.

The Annuity Board countered that while they may have accidentally strayed from their program assignment, it was not with the intent of harming any other Baptist group. Rather, they said, the intent was to help Baptist entities achieve the best possible return on their investments.

The gist of the Annuity Board's defense is that, because they manage about \$4 billion in annuity investments already, they have the leverage to obtain better returns on other investments as well.

One example given was that an unnamed SBC board — presumably the Foreign Mission Board — could earn up to \$4 million more on its money next year if placed under Annuity Board management instead of its current management.

The Annuity Board contends it would not be drawing business away from the Baptist foundations but from secular investment companies.

On the other hand, the foundation executives contend the Annuity Board should be held strictly to its program statement for the sake of preventing confusion. Further, they argue allowing the Annuity Board to enter management of agency and board endowments would encroach upon their own business.

Annuity Board representatives have said they plan to return to the September Executive Committee meeting with a proposed change in their program statement that would allow them to offer these services. For the time being, however, the board has agreed to "discontinue expanding" such services.

Upon the subcommittee's recommendation, the full Executive Committee passed a motion requesting this of the Annuity Board. Further, the committee asked the board to stop expanding its management of annuity services beyond specifically sanctioned SBC churches, agencies, associations, and state conventions.

Apparently this means the Annuity Board will not discontinue its accounts with Criswell College, Mid-America Seminary, and the Fellowship. However, adding any more such accounts would be prohibited for now.

Powell indicated the Annuity Board would abide by both requests.

Wingfield is news director, Kentucky WESTERN RECORDER. Bob Terry of the Missouri WORD & WAY contributed to this story.

Thursday, March 3, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

## Names in the News

New Hope Church, Oktibbeha County, recently held a deacon ordination service for Tim Armstrong and Louis Wasson.

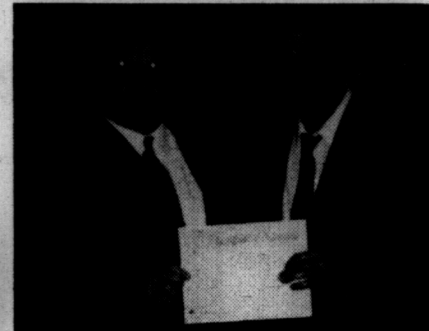
Maribeth Slinkard has joined the staff of the Mississippi Medical Information Network (MMIN) at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center. She will direct marketing and recruitment for the MMIN. The MMIN, a computerized message network, is a service which allows physicians rapid communication with hospitals or other doctors.

Slinkard

Benny Jackson began his 21st year in full-time evangelism in February, 1994. Before entering the field of evangelism he was pastor of churches in Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee for 14 years. Jackson lives at 2873 Belgrave Dr., Germantown, TN 38138; phone (901) 757-2829.

Steve and Annie Chapman will be presented in concert at Poplar Springs Church, Meridian, Saturday, March 12, at 7 p.m. For more information, call 485-5106.

Leroy Stuart and the Diplomats will sing at Good Hope Church, Leake County, Saturday, March 5, at 7 p.m.



Rob Gildewell, left, was ordained to the gospel ministry at Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth, on Jan. 16. He has been called to pastor First Church, Burnsville. Kara Blackard, pastor of Wheeler Grove Church, is pictured with Gildewell.

## Clarence Cooper Sr. dies at 66

Clarence J. Cooper Sr., 66, retired minister, died of heart disease Feb. 5 in Birmingham, Ala. Cooper pastored churches in Mississippi including Bethel Church, Union County, and Duncan Hill Church, Calhoun City. He was a member of Bethel Church, Pinedale Community, Union County, at the time of his death. Funeral services were held at Bethel Church with burial in Bethel Church Cemetery.

Survivors include his wife, Clara; two sons, Clarence J. Cooper Jr. of Grenada and Charlie Cooper of Rienzi; one sister; three brothers; three grandsons, and one granddaughter.

## SBC Missions Day Camp provides fun for children

Missions Day Camp is for boys and girls who will have completed grades one through six this year and whose parents are attending the Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando. It is sponsored by the Brotherhood Commission.

This year the process for Missions Day Camp registration has changed. Pre-registration is now required. To pre-register a child, write SBC Missions Day Camp, Brotherhood Commission, SBC, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104 or call (901) 272-2461, and a registration packet will be mailed to you. Pre-registration must be received by the Brother-

hood Commission no later than March 13.

A three-day package price of \$62 per child is available. A two-day package is available for \$52 for Tuesday and Wednesday. The individual day cost per child per day is \$35 for Tuesday; \$24 for Wednesday; and \$17 for Thursday.

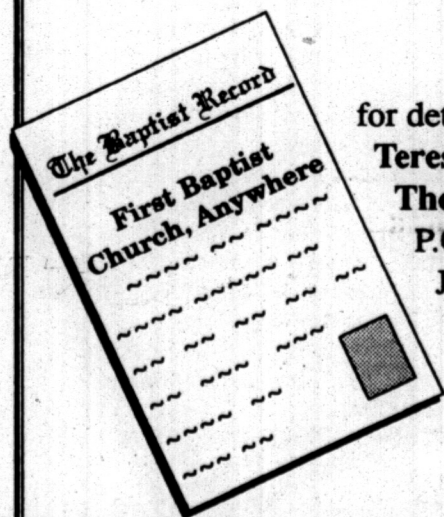
Missions Day Camp provides a missions education program for children of messengers during all daytime sessions of the convention, Tuesday 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Wednesday 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and Thursday 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or earlier if the convention adjourns early.

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## Spring Bible Conference

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&

Dr. Paige Patterson

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## Baptist women volunteers in Delta ice storm

Name	Hometown	Home church
Mae Hardin	Winona	First, Winona
Peggy Huey	Hattiesburg	First, H'burg
Joan Tyler	Collins	Collins
Yvonne Martin	Tylertown	Tylertown
Kay Cassibry*	Clinton	First, Jackson
Jan Cossitt*	Clinton	First, Flora

\*State WMU staff

—Source: Mississippi WMU Department

## Staff Changes

Mashulaville Church, Macon, has called Olyn Roberts as pastor effective Feb. 13. A native of Louisville, he received

his education at Clarke College, Mississippi College, and New Orleans Seminary. He retired as DOM for Adams-Union Association. He has served as pastor of Blythe Creek Church, Choctaw County.

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First Church, Batesville, has



Kilgore

called Alan Kilgore as pastor effective Jan. 23. A native of Moss Point, he received his education at Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was First Church, Aberdeen.



## Uniform Saved by faith



By Doug Bain  
Romans 1

In *No Place for Truth, or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology*, David Wells may be correct. He suggests that in abandoning a concern with doctrine, evangelicals are surrendering to the values of modern culture. Although such a dilemma is complex, our study of Romans can be helpful, since Romans is the most systematically theological of Paul's writings. Our study of Romans can be helpful in other ways as well. The incredible human dilemma that results in stalemates receives its only possible remedy in the experience of faith. The first half of Chapter 1 introduces this great treatise on faith.

An identity shaped by the good news (vv. 1-7). In the historically conditioned aspect of verse 1, Paul sets out his own sense of identity. He is a servant-bonded-to-Christ and he is a sent-out one, an apostle just as much as any other apostle is, and he is set apart for the gospel agenda. In the timeless aspect of verse 1 as Scripture for today, hearers are challenged to ask how we might conceive our own sense of identity. Could I be one who is indentured and on mission, set apart to experience, exhibit, express, and embody good news?

Reference to "the gospel of God" is to be understood not only possessively as God's good news, but also as the good news about God. And in ultimate context the good news is about God — that he is for us and not against us, that he is the Father concerned with our returning and our maturing.

The brief summary of the gospel message in verses 2-7 reveals antecedents in the Old Testament prophets. The good news about God is communicated through his Supreme Representative who has a human lineage from David, with his divine lineage attested in the resurrection. Through that risen Lord, Paul received grace and apostleship for calling people to obedient faith. The fact that Paul's expression of a servant identity is included in holy Scripture indicates that God calls us to an identity shaped by the good news, with lives given purpose by the death and by the life of Jesus.

Concern for "foreign believers" (vv. 8-15). In verse 8, thanksgiving is offered for those Roman believers whom Paul apparently had never met — but their reputation as people of faith had certainly reached him. In verse 9-13, Paul expresses his longing to visit these believers. Paul senses their need for administrative oversight and spiritual strengthening and he adopts the challenge; they seem to be basically Gentiles (v. 13) and he is the "apostle to the Gentiles." What a sense of identity and mission he states in verse 14 — he "owes a debt" to the cultured Greek and to the less cultured barbarian. Although the debt is actually to God, Paul works on discharging that debt by sharing good news. We, too, can address the issue of our indebtedness to God by embodying good news about him to those "in Rome."

The power of the gospel (vv. 16-17). If Romans has key verses, these are probably the ones, containing also the theme of Romans. Herein we learn that the good news concerns God's power, and when it is proclaimed it is God's power. Truth is not a set of correctly formulated doctrinal propositions, and neither is good news. Truth and good news open up new horizons, new possibilities, and new orientations for the future, and as Paul indicates here, they also involve power. He suggests that faith is the occasion when that resurrection power is operative. The good news story, when proclaimed and received, demonstrates the rightness that God has for people, and that rightness is only to be received through the gift of faith.

The good news is about experiencing God's power to deliver us from darkness and bondage, whatever the source — even cultural captivity, civil religion, and modern suburban affluent substitutions for sacrificial servanthood. Are we convinced that deliverance from such cherished security is really good news? Could it be that even after being saved, we continue to need a Savior? The saving we need is not only from "sin," but from ourselves and our own deceptive darkness. And saving is not only from, it is for — for the new humanity, new horizons, and a new center.

Bain is professor, biblical and related studies, Blue Mountain College.

## Bible Book Jesus as Messiah



By Dan Howard  
John 7

We may have experienced being misunderstood. We may have misunderstood others because of preconceived ideas or mistaken conclusions. In Jesus' day, there were many people who had preconceived ideas about the Messiah that produced much of the controversy which surrounded Jesus. This lesson challenges us to explore ways we can dispel present-day mistaken ideas about Jesus.

Controversy surrounding Jesus (vv. 12-13). It was time in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths. Jesus was encouraged by his half-brothers to attend and demonstrate his power. Jesus refused to publicly go to the feast because he knew that the Jewish leaders were seeking to kill him and this was not the best time to do something. We can learn from this that listening to Jesus is important if we want to know the most opportune time for us to act. Trusting him to guide us is essential. We also can understand that his timing does not always fit our schedule.

In verses 12 and 13 we see that there was much controversy about Jesus among the people. The word translated "murmuring" (KJV) or "grumbling" (NASV) indicates that the discussion about Jesus was a rather quiet discussion. People were whispering in low voices. Some people saw Jesus as leading the multitude astray. Both sides were controlled by fear of the Jewish leaders to the point that they did not speak publicly about Jesus. Fear will hinder us from doing things in the kingdom of God. 1 Timothy 1:7 says, "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity (fear), but of power and love and discipline" (NASV).

Some of the people believe on Jesus (vv. 25-31). Several days into the feast Jesus did appear in Jerusalem and began to teach. The people were astonished at his teaching since he had not attended any of the theological schools of his day. The people were also confused. They knew that the Jewish leaders had a plan to kill Jesus, but they had made no attempt to follow through with their plan. This made the people wonder if the leaders understood Jesus to be the Messiah.

The people quickly settled the question of Jesus' messiahship by stating that they knew his hometown and they knew his family of origin. The reason they came to this conclusion was their belief that no one would know the origin of the Messiah.

Jesus goes on to state that he had come from God and that he was intimately acquainted with God. The people questioning Jesus did not have an intimate relationship with the Father.

At this point a mob of people sought to take Jesus and kill him. Through the mighty intervention of God they were prevented from touching Jesus. It is great to know that we serve a God who can and will protect us.

Many of the people who heard Jesus speak did believe. They did not believe that anyone could do more miracles than Jesus. The question in verse 31 expects a "no" answer.

Mixed reactions to Jesus (vv. 37-43). The Pharisees and chief priests responded to Jesus by sending a group of officers to arrest Jesus. This was a strange alliance because the chief priests were a part of the Sadducees. The Sadducees and the Pharisees had many opposing views on numerous issues.

Jesus continued to teach in spite of those threats. On the last day of the feast Jesus stood and offered living water to all those who believed on him.

In verse 39 we are told that the living water represented the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has always existed, but mankind did not experience his full power until Pentecost.

There were mixed reactions to the true identity of Jesus. Some were saying that he was a prophet. Others were saying that Jesus was the Messiah. Still others said that he was of the seed of David. Those differing points of view could be attributed to preconceived ideas about the Messiah and assumptions made about the identity of Jesus.

People are still divided over the identity of Jesus. Some will accept him; others, reject him. Our responsibility is to share with others the difference Christ has made in our lives and the difference he can make in theirs. As we consistently live the example of Christ, much of the controversy about him will be dispelled.

Howard is pastor of Woodville Church, Woodville.

## Life and Work What does Christ expect?



By Billie Buckley  
Luke 17

When our sons got married, I wrote them a letter on what to expect from a marriage commitment. I wrote:

"Today your love is beautiful and elegant. Yet, there will come days when it becomes plain and homely from work and stress. You may still call it love.

"It is candlelight softness right now. But, one day, it may be hard and tough. You may still call it love.

"On this your wedding day, your love is courageous and determined. Know that one day it may be fearful and weak. You may still call it love.

"Please remember this also: when she is scared, be her strength; when she is sad, be her joy; when she is tired, be her energy; when she is lonely, be her friend; when she is a mother, be her helpmate; and when she is old, be her lover."

As important as it is to teach our sons and daughters what to expect from marriage, even more important is it to teach them what Christ expects. Our Scripture today instructs us on this matter.

When others are weak, avoid leading them into sin (vv. 1-3a). Jesus taught his disciples that one of their responsibilities was to not lead others to sin, and as a result, to be separated from God. The consequences are serious when we engage in this destruction business.

Instead, Christ expects us to be in the construction business and not the destruction of pulling down others. Leading others to sin by our example means we are called "least in the kingdom" (Matt. 5:19).

We need to pray, "Father, encompass us with thy loving care of others and realize in us your highest purpose."

When others are sorry, forgive them (vv. 3b-4). Jesus pointed out that believers have a responsibility to help each other in regard to sin — to point it out and to forgive each other. A real forgiving attitude comes when we feel so absorbed in God's interest in others that we are actually indifferent to our own need to hug to ourselves our hurts, resentments, and unforgiving spirits.

When we forgive we leave behind certain things. We don't brood over the past. We are freed from tempers, pride, and bad-mouthing others. Leaving behind this unforgiving spirit helps us to run in the path that God has marked for us by the direction of his Holy Spirit.

When others are powerless, live by faith for them to see faith's power (vv. 5-6). Jesus encouraged us to exercise in these verses not our body, but our faith. When believers exercise their faith in God, they allow the power of God to be evident in them.

Faith gives us clearness of vision — no squinting, no distortion, no looking in two directions. Jesus shared this faith with his disciples. What kind of faith do you share today?

Faith believes that God lives in the present. He is the great I AM — not WAS, not WILL BE. He is present today in my sadness or joy, my classroom or job, my plans and purposes.

When others are powerful rulers, serve humbly with obedience (vv. 7-10). Jesus never taught us that serving others means that we don't recognize and accept our strengths. We need to have a sense of worth and value about our lives. There is no divorce needed between these two concepts.

There is a warning needed to those who serve him in "full-time service." Public ministry and personal ministry must be combined. "Referee servants" who blow the whistle is not enough. Most referees in any given sport blow the whistles or drop the flags to tell the players what they did wrong. As soon as the game is over they are gone. Personally, I don't think we need spiritual leaders who play by those rules. We need those whose hearts beat with God's love so as to move their hands and feet as well as their voices.

What does Christ expect? Could it be that he expects us to serve him with a consistent lifestyle? True servanthood is not for an event, or a day, or paraded in public.

It is a private, day-after-day, giving evidence of God's rule and God's love in our hearts. This is what Christ expects. Nothing less. Nothing more.

Buckley is a member of Petal-Harvey Church, Petal.



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



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## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

NOV. 1, 1993-  
NOV. 30, 1993

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Mrs. Annie Pearl Triplett  
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Mrs. Joetta Tillman  
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Mr. Don Young  
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DEC. 1, 1993-  
DEC. 31, 1993

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Mr. & Mrs. Walter B. Moore  
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Fidells SS, Kilmichael BC  
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Adult One SS, Hillcrest BC  
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Mr. & Mrs. Bud Thigpen  
Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Lucas Jr.  
Charlie and Linda Thomas  
Mr. & Mrs. W. A. Thomas



Young people on our India Nunnery Campus, Jackson, enjoyed a "western style" Valentine's Banquet. Western food, western clothes, western decorations all added to the festive spirit of the evening. Mike and Andrea Reed led the group in fun music and games as part of the entertainment for the evening. They were a big hit. Thank you, Mike and Andrea.

Miss Jessie Threlfall  
Mr. & Mrs. George T. Parish  
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Vickery  
Mr. & Mrs. Lon D. Pepper Sr.  
Rev. & Mrs. John L. Walker  
& Family  
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Galilee BC, Gloster  
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Mrs. Ann C. Tillman  
Mrs. Ross Clower  
Fidells SS, FBC Crystal Springs  
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Clyde L. Clunan Sr.  
Harold Chevrolet Company  
Herman Coats Sr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Herman Coats  
Zema Cody & Maggie Thunderburk  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul R. Conwill

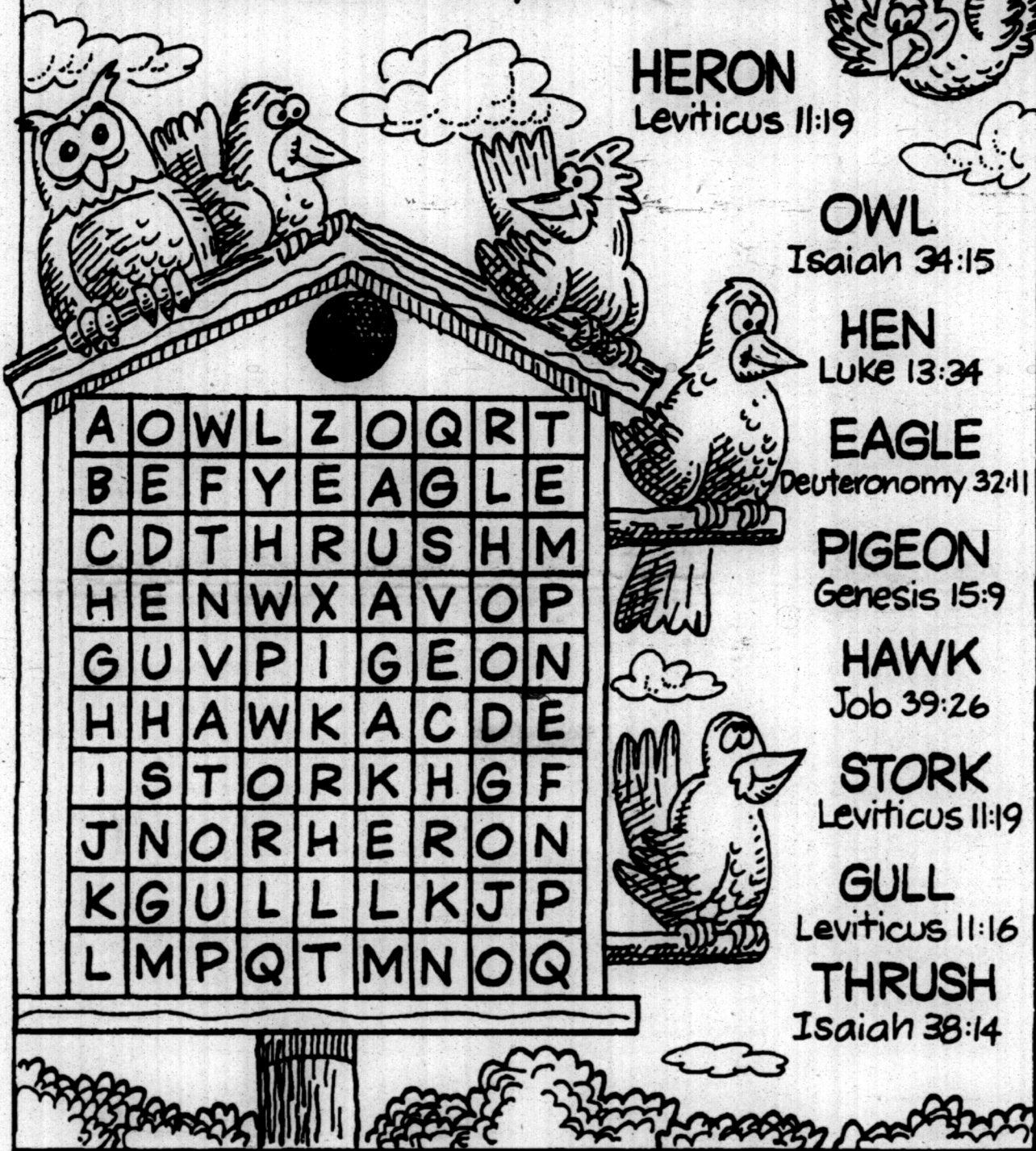
(to be continued)



# CHILDREN'S PAGE

## Birds

There are 9 birds hidden in the birdhouse below. Can you find them?



**HERON**  
Leviticus 11:19

**OWL**  
Isaiah 34:15

**HEN**  
Luke 13:34

**EAGLE**  
Deuteronomy 32:11

**PIGEON**  
Genesis 15:9

**HAWK**  
Job 39:26

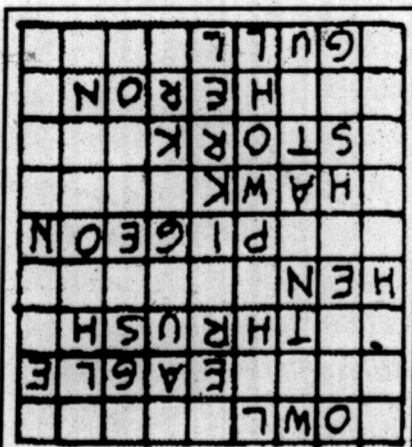
**STORK**  
Leviticus 11:19

**GULL**  
Leviticus 11:16  
**THRUSH**  
Isaiah 38:14

Source: *Fun Stuff for Kids*, by Michael Streff  
(Zondervan Publishing House, 1994).

Available at your local bookstore or by calling 1-800-727-3480.

### Solution:

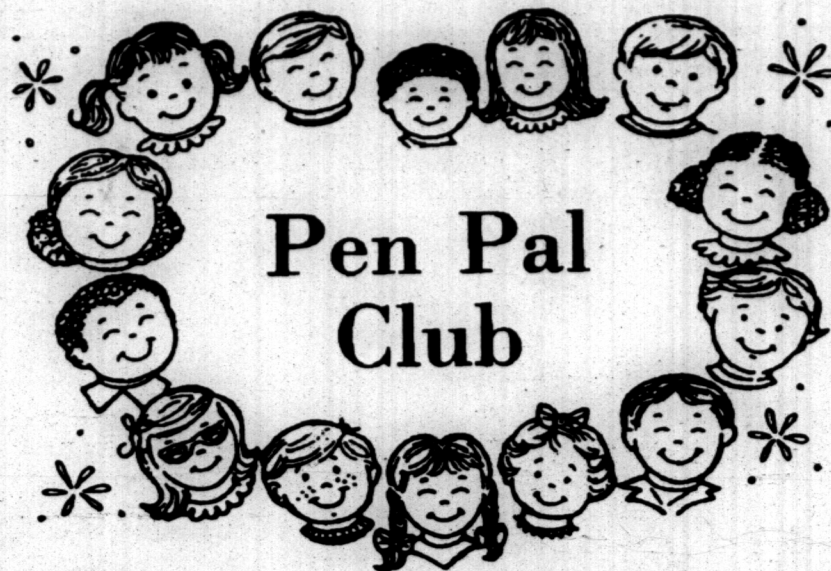


### Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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WYYKNZEJC PK PDA SKNZ PDWP E YKRAJWJPAZ  
SEPD UKQ SDAJ UA YWIA KQP KB ACULP, OK IU  
OLENEP NAIWEJAPD WIKJC UKQ: BAWN UA JKP.  
DWCCWE PSK:BERA

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: First John One:Five.



## Pen Pal Club

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Austin McClelland. I'm 8 years old and in the second grade. My birthday is Nov. 5. My teacher is Mrs. Smith. She is nice. I attend Sturgis Attendance Center. I go to Wake Forest Baptist Church. I live in Sturgis, Miss. I have three dogs and one cat. I love to hunt. I do not care if my pen pal is a boy or girl. My hobbies are playing baseball, basketball, jumping on the trampoline, and playing with my sister.  
Austin McClelland  
2540 Berry Rd.  
Sturgis, MS 39769

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Paige Jones. I am 10 years old and in the fifth grade. I like cheerleading and turning flips. I am a member of Friendship Baptist Church. I am a Girl Scout and take gymnastics and dance. I would like boys and girls any age to write to me.  
Paige Jones  
2976 Baswell Dr.  
Sturgis, MS 39769

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Jimmy Franks. I am 10 years old. My hobby is raising horses and riding them. I am in the fifth grade. My teacher's name is Mrs. Loreli Morgan. I live in a little town in Mississippi called Sturgis. I go to a church called Wake Forest Baptist Church. I would like a boy or pen pal to write to me at:  
Jimmy Franks  
3554 Big Creek Rd.  
Sturgis, MS 39769

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Lee Ann Holt. I am in the fifth grade and 11 years old. I love pen pals, boys or girls. My hobbies are reading, swimming, playing with my dog Trooper, and playing different sports. I go to Water Valley Elementary School. Please send me a picture. If you would like to write me, my address is:  
Lee Ann Holt  
Rt. 1, Box 149  
Water Valley, MS 38965

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
Hi! My name is Holley Carpenter. I'm 13 years old. I attend Immanuel Baptist Church. My hobbies are talking on the phone, shopping, writing letters and stories, playing basketball, and cheerleading. I would like for a boy or girl of any age to write me.  
Holley Carpenter  
P.O. Box 177  
Carrollton, MS 38917

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Brooke McClelland. I'm 10 years old and in the fifth grade. My birthday is July 22. My hobbies are reading, talking on the phone, finding snails and slugs, writing to pen pals, helping around, swimming, watching satellite TV, baseball, basketball, and hunting. I have 11 snails, three dogs, two cats, and seven chickens. I go to Sturgis Attendance Center. My teacher is Mrs. Loreli Morgan. She is nice. I do not care if I have a boy or girl to write me. Please send a photo.  
Brooke McClelland  
2540 Berry Rd.  
Sturgis, MS 39769

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Krystal Reynolds. I am 13 years old. I am a member of the First Baptist Church of Rose Hill. My hobbies are skating, bowling, reading, and playing sports. If you would like to be my pen pal, write me, and if possible, send a picture. I will be sure to write you back.  
Krystal Reynolds  
Rt. 1, Box 154  
Rose Hill, MS 39356

Dear Pen Pal Club,  
My name is Kristen Burton. I am 10 years old. I am in the fourth grade. My hobbies are writing, riding my bike, playing outside, and reading. I would like boys from anywhere in the world to write to me.  
Kristen Burton  
Rt. 7, Box 316F  
Tupelo, MS 38801

**Baptist Record**

005-DTM BAPT HISTORICAL SD 00  
SOUTHERN BAPT HISTORICAL SD 00  
901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 401  
NASHVILLE TN 37203

March 3, 1994